

Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

MINUTES

January 23, 2013, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Members Present: Eric Weis, Jef Nickerson, Matthew Moritz, Jenn Steinfeld

Staff: David Everett, Sheila Dormody

Guests: Nate Urso, Providence Dept. of Public Works

Nate Urso was supposed to be first on the agenda but was late in arriving so the agenda order was rearranged somewhat.

Jef Nickerson started the meeting by discussing issues relating to traffic speed and safety on South Main Street and related merchant concerns. Based on his meeting, suggested remedies include a raised crosswalk in coordination with the planned pedestrian bridge or at another intersecting street in the area. Discussion followed about planned sidewalk construction and the need to coordinate with IWay/ RIDOT work, although the sidewalk project may be a separate matter. Follow-up information will be gathered for the February BPAC meeting. Jef also reported that S. Main merchants have complaints about Saturday parking meters and their effects on business.

Nate Urso addressed sidewalks and crosswalks, particularly the most effective location of the latter. He said there are standards but that it is subjective as well and that studies are inconclusive as to whether

crosswalks are marked or unmarked (marked crossings potentially giving pedestrians a false sense of security). Nate suggested that the commission get in touch with RIDOT about possible funding for public service announcements and educational campaigns and said he would provide the specific contact information. He said that these efforts can really help. Other safety measures including lighting and traffic calming were also discussed. Eric Weis asked about pot hole reporting; Nate replied that it should be done through ProvConnex and that pot holes should be patched within 24 hours.

Mr. Urso and the commission also discussed the City's road paving program and the coordination of that effort with bike lane markings and other non-structural bicycle safety improvements. Matt Moritz agreed to draft a letter endorsing bike lane and shared road markings on the four roads in the first round of contracts: Olney, Prairie, Melrose, and Potter's.

Peter Asen, Director of the Providence Healthy Communities Office, initiated a discussion about the potential need for a marked crosswalk on Prairie Avenue near Fogarty Elementary School as well as safety issues in general in the area and the condition of sidewalks after the recent snowfall. Abby Kretsch of Family Service of RI amplified these concerns to the commission and Nate Urso of DPW. City staff and commission members will stay on top of this.

There was a brief discussion about City policy with regard to

cobblestone streets and maintenance. Nate Urso said that some streets with cobblestones under the pavement would be simply repaved while others would have cobbles reset and replaced. There was no knowledge of any specific City policy regarding preservation of existing exposed cobblestone streets. David Everett will look into this.

Matt Moritz was to follow up on keeping BPAC and the Bike Providence plan updated on all DOT bike lane plans.

Jenn Steinfeld and Jef Nickerson reported on commission communications. There is a page on the Dept. of Sustainability website with links to the Secretary of State meeting agenda and minutes posts. The link to the page will be put on future agendas and elsewhere to publicize meetings. Jef will work on creating BPAC letterhead.

Brief discussion regarding Zip Car; the location of bicycle amenities and racks/parking should be coordinated with Zip Car spaces. Eric will draft a letter to this effect.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted by David Everett

Approved 2/20/13